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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WHITE HOUSE SUPPORT STAFF

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State Department review completed

DIRECTOR: WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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SUBJECT: Iran-Iraq Border Dispute in the Security Council

The UN Security Council met for two hours last night to hear Iraq's charges of Iranian aggression along their common border. The Iraqi and Iranian ambassadors, who were the only speakers, each argued that the other party's forces had initiated the recent border clashes.

The Council adjourned until February 20 leaving five days for private negotiations. Council members are expected to search for some compromise formula which might dissuade Iraq from its insistence on a full public debate. There has been concern that a superpower confrontation might develop if the Council is forced to debate this dispute. Smaller states on the fifteen-member body also seem anxious to avoid taking a position in this clash between the two oil-producers.

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The Soviet Union has shown no desire to support a resolution on a full Council session. Moscow has informally expressed interest in closed door meetings ending with a resolution urging the parties to resolve their dispute bilaterally. France, which holds this month's Council presidency, has also assisted efforts to direct the dispute to private mediation channels.

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Comments by the Shah and other leading Iranians to US officials suggest that Tehran still regards the clashes as isolated incidents--albeit serious ones--and not sufficient cause to end the cautious rapprochement between the two countries that began last October. The Shah has indicated he will receive the Iraqi ambassador-designate February 16 for presentation of his credentials.